

**INFORMATION PROCESING METHOD AND SYSTEM USING MEDICAL  
EXAMINATION DEVICE AS MEDIUM**

This application claims a benefit of foreign  
5 priority based on Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-  
267327, filed on September 12, 2002, which is hereby  
incorporated by reference herein in its entirety as if  
fully set forth herein.

10 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates generally to  
information processing method and system using a  
medical examination device (MED) as a medium, and more  
15 particularly to those in a medical system that uses a  
MED, such as a DNA chip, a lab on a chip, a micro-array,  
a micro-TAS, a device for inspection using a quartz  
crystal microbalance (QCM) reaction, etc. for medical  
examinations, diagnoses, etc.

20 Recent medical examinations, diagnoses, etc. have  
actively developed a medical system that uses a MED  
referred to as a QCM DNA chip, a lab on a chip, a  
micro-array, a micro-TAS, etc.

However, widespread MEDs have raised a issue of  
25 managements of the MEDs and information obtained from  
the MEDs. For example, it is known that the MED has a  
short product life cycle, and requires careful control.

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In addition, usages are different according to MED types, and a misuse results in a different result, causing an improper diagnosis. The misdiagnosis is a great problem in a medical inspection result.

5        It is conceivable that mailing is used to inform a result obtained from a chip, but this procedure is arduously repeated by the number of institutions when plural institutions need the result. It is quite important to securely process information of an MED  
10    that may identify personal information.

      There may be recited following considerations between institutions handling MEDs and individual users:

      (1) MED vendors (who manufacture and ship MEDs)  
15    need control MEDs' product life cycles, circulations and purchasers.

      (2) Distributors (who circulate and sell MEDs) need confirm shipping dates of MEDs.

      (3) Medical institutions and drugstores (which  
20    supply and sell MEDs) need to use MEDs within their lifetimes, to confirm their contents, to recognize their usages and inform them to individual users, and to recognize inspection results of MEDs.

      (4) Individual users or patients need to  
25    recognize usages and inspection results of MEDs.

      (5) Inspection institutions (which inspect MEDs and supply inspection results) need to recognize usage

records of MEDs, and to easily inform inspection results of MEDs.

(6) MED vendors (who recycle MEDs) need to recognize usage records of MEDs, and easily inform  
5 recycles of MEDs.

As apparent from the above, institutions handling MEDs and individual users have common and specific considerations regarding managements of MEDs themselves and information obtained from the MEDs. However, no  
10 approaches have not yet been developed for sharing and effectively utilizing information obtained from MEDs among institutions handling MEDs and individual users.

#### **BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

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Accordingly, it is an exemplary object of the present invention to provide information processing method and system using a medical examination device as a medium, which enables information obtained from the  
20 medical examination devices to be shared and effectively utilized among institutions handling medical examination devices and individual users.

An information processing method of one aspect according to the present invention that utilizes a  
25 medical examination device as a medium, which has been assigned a unique identification used for medical examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which

particular additional information about the medical examination device is remotely writable through a network based on the identification of the medical examination device includes the steps of identifying the identification of the medical examination device, and writing down in the memory the particular additional information relating to a usage of the medical examination device while correlating the particular additional information with the identification, and sharing and utilizing the particular additional information about the medical examination device among a plurality of users based on the identification.

An information processing method of another aspect according to the present invention that utilizes a medical examination device as a medium, which has been assigned a unique identification used for medical examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which particular additional information about the medical examination device is remotely writable through a network based on the identification of the medical examination device includes the steps of identifying the identification of the medical examination device, and writing down in the memory first particular additional information relating to a usage of the medical examination device while correlating the first particular additional information with the

identification, writing down second particular  
 additional information in the memory while correlating  
 the second particular additional information with the  
 identification, reading out one or more pieces from  
 5 among the first and second particular additional  
 information based on the identification, and sharing  
 and utilizing plural pieces of particular additional  
 information about the medical examination device among  
 a plurality of users based on the identification.

10 An information processing method of still another  
 aspect according to the present invention that utilizes  
 a medical examination device as a medium, which has  
 been assigned a unique identification used for medical  
 examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which  
 15 particular additional information about the medical  
 examination device is remotely writable through a  
 network based on the identification of the medical  
 examination device includes the steps of identifying  
 the identification of the medical examination device,  
 20 and writing down in the memory first particular  
 additional information relating to a usage of the  
 medical examination device while correlating the first  
 particular additional information with the  
 identification, writing down second particular  
 25 additional information relating to an inspection in the  
 memory while correlating the second particular  
 additional information with the identification, writing

down third particular additional information in the  
memory while correlating the third particular  
additional information with the identification, reading  
out one or more pieces from among the first to third  
5 particular additional information based on the  
identification, and sharing and utilizing plural pieces  
of particular additional information about the medical  
examination device among a plurality of users based on  
the identification.

10       An information processing method of another aspect  
according to the present invention that utilizes a  
medical examination device as a medium, which has been  
assigned a unique identification used for medical  
examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which  
15 particular additional information about the medical  
examination device is remotely writable through a  
network based on the identification of the medical  
examination device includes the steps of identifying  
the identification of the medical examination device,  
20 and writing down in the memory first particular  
additional information relating to a usage of the  
medical examination device while correlating the first  
particular additional information with the  
identification, writing down second particular  
25 additional information relating to a circulation in the  
memory while correlating the second particular  
additional information with the identification, writing

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down third particular additional information relating  
to an inspection in the memory while correlating the  
third particular additional information with the  
identification, reading out one or more pieces from  
5 among the first to third particular additional  
information based on the identification, and sharing  
and utilizing plural pieces of particular additional  
information about the medical examination device among  
a plurality of users based on the identification.

10       An information processing method of another aspect  
according to the present invention that utilizes a  
medical examination device as a medium, which has been  
assigned a unique identification used for medical  
examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which  
15 particular additional information about the medical  
examination device is remotely writable through a  
network based on the identification of the medical  
examination device includes the steps of identifying  
the identification of the medical examination device,  
20 and writing down in the memory first particular  
additional information relating to a usage of the  
medical examination device while correlating the first  
particular additional information with the  
identification, writing down second particular  
25 additional information relating to a circulation in the  
memory while correlating the second particular  
additional information with the identification, writing

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down third particular additional information relating  
to an inspection in the memory while correlating the  
third particular additional information with the  
identification, writing down fourth particular  
5 additional information relating to a disposal after the  
inspection in the memory while correlating the fourth  
particular additional information with the  
identification, reading out one or more pieces from the  
first to fourth particular additional information based  
10 on the identification, and sharing and utilizing plural  
pieces of particular additional information about the  
medical examination device among a plurality of users  
based on the identification.

An information processing method of another aspect  
15 according to the present invention that utilizes a  
medical examination device as a medium, which has been  
assigned a unique identification used for medical  
examinations and diagnoses, and a memory into which  
particular additional information about the medical  
20 examination device is remotely writable through a  
network based on the identification of the medical  
examination device includes the steps of identifying  
the identification of the medical examination device,  
and writing down in the memory first particular  
25 additional information relating to a usage of the  
medical examination device while correlating the first  
particular additional information with the



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identification, writing down second particular  
additional information relating to a circulation in the  
memory while correlating the second particular  
additional information with the identification, writing  
5 down, through an inspected person, third particular  
additional information relating to an inspection in the  
memory while correlating the third particular  
additional information with the identification, reading  
out one or more pieces from the first to third  
10 particular additional information based on the  
identification, and sharing and utilizing plural pieces  
of particular additional information about the medical  
examination device among a plurality of users based on  
the identification.

15        An information processing method that utilizes a  
medical examination device as a medium, which has been  
assigned a unique identification used for medical  
examinations and diagnoses, a memory into which  
particular additional information about the medical  
20 examination device is remotely writable through a  
network based on the identification of the medical  
examination device, a plurality of input / output units  
for remotely writing information into and reading the  
information from the memory through the network based  
25 on the identification of the medical examination device,  
includes the step of sharing and utilizing the  
particular additional information about the medical

examination device among a plurality of users based on the identification.

In the above information processing method, the network may be the Internet. The particular additional  
5 information relating to a usage of the medical examination device may include information of a lifetime of the medical examination device. The medical examination device may be a device for inspection with a quartz crystal microbalance (QCM)  
10 reaction. The medical examination device may be a DNA chip. The medical examination device may be a lab on a chip that forms a channel on a substrate for processes on the substrate through a chemical or physical reaction. The medical examination device may be a  
15 protein chip. The medical examination device may be a DNA micro-array.

An information processing system of another aspect according to the present invention includes a medical examination device as a medium, which has been assigned  
20 a unique identification used for medical examinations and diagnoses, a memory into which particular additional information about the medical examination device is remotely writable through a network based on the identification of the medical examination device,  
25 and a plurality of input units for remotely writing the particular additional information down in the memory through the network based on the identification of the

medical examination device, the input units being  
provided at least for a supplier of the medical  
examination device, a seller who sells the medical  
examination device supplied by the supplier, and an  
5 inspection institution that inspects the medical  
examination device.

An information processing system of another aspect  
according to the present invention includes a medical  
examination device as a medium, which has been assigned  
10 a unique identification used for medical examinations  
and diagnoses, a memory into which particular  
additional information about the medical examination  
device is remotely writable through a network based on  
the identification of the medical examination device,  
15 and a plurality of input units for remotely writing the  
particular additional information down in the memory  
through the network based on the identification of the  
medical examination device, the input units being  
provided at least for a supplier of the medical  
20 examination device, a seller who sells the medical  
examination device supplied by the supplier, and an  
examinee subject to an examination using the medical  
examination device.

An information processing system includes a  
25 medical examination device as a medium, which has been  
assigned a unique identification used for medical  
examinations and diagnoses, a memory, particular

additional information about the medical examination device being remotely writable into and readable from the memory through a network based on the identification of the medical examination device, and a  
5 plurality of input / output units for remotely writing and reading the particular additional information in and from the memory through the network based on the identification of the medical examination device, wherein a plurality of users share and utilize, based  
10 on the identification, the particular additional information including the usage of the medical examination device which has been written while correlated with the identification in the memory.

In the above information processing system, the  
15 network may be the Internet. The particular additional information relating to a usage of the medical examination device may include information of a lifetime of the medical examination device. The medical examination device may be a device for  
20 inspection with a quartz crystal microbalance (QCM) reaction. The medical examination device may be a DNA chip. The medical examination device may be a lab on a chip that forms a channel on a substrate for processes on the substrate through a chemical or physical  
25 reaction. The medical examination device may be a protein chip. The medical examination device may be a DNA micro-array.

Other objects and further features of the present invention will become readily apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments with reference to accompanying drawings.

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#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

FIG. 1 is a view of a first embodiment according to the present invention showing one mode of share and  
10 utilization of a medical examination device among plural users, which has been shipped by a medical examination device vendor.

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a utilization mode of the medical examination device in the first embodiment  
15 shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a view of a second embodiment according to the present invention showing one mode of share and utilization of a medical examination device among  
20 plural users, which has been shipped by a medical examination device vendor.

FIG. 4 is a flowchart of a utilization mode of the medical examination device in the second embodiment shown in FIG. 3.

FIG. 5A is a view of a medical device using a DNA  
25 chip of one embodiment according to the present invention. FIG. 5B is a view of a medical device

using a DNA chip of another embodiment according to the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a view of a first embodiment according to the present invention for explaining a system that  
5 uses a network with the Internet of the first embodiment according to the present invention to enable information to be written in and read from storage means in a server.

FIG. 7 is a view of a second embodiment according  
10 to the present invention for explaining a system that uses a LAN with the Internet of the first embodiment according to the present invention to enable information to be written in and read from storage means in a server.

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#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

Preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be described in detail in accordance with the  
20 accompanying drawings.

When the above information processing method and system are applied, for example, an information processing method utilizes a MED such as a DNA chip, which has been assigned a unique identification used  
25 for medical examinations, diagnoses, etc. a memory in a server, etc. into which particular additional information about the medical examination device is

remotely writable and readable through a network, such as the Internet, based on the identification of the medical examination device, and plural input / output units (such as PCs provided in an MED supplier, seller and inspection institution) for remotely writing particular additional information relating to a usage of the MED into and reading the information from the memory through the network. Thereby, the particular additional information may be shared and utilized among a plurality of users based on the identification.

This enables, for example, the MED vendor to manage a lifetime of the MED, as well as realizing real-time managements of the usage of the MED in a process of circulation and at a purchaser. The medical institution and drugstore may process an MED within its lifetime, and easily recognize the contents and usage of the MED and inform a user of the information.

Moreover, an individual user may easily recognize the usage of the MED. The inspection institution recognizes a use record of a MED, providing more accurate inspection and detection, and easily informing an inspection result of the MED. The medical institution and individual user may promptly and accurately recognize an inspection result by the inspection institution.

According to the above information processing method and system, sharing and utilizing of particular

additional information among plural users based on the identification would effectively utilize the particular additional information of the MEDs. For example, the medical institution may recognize how the MED has been used. Here, it is conceivable to commit a disposal of any used MED to a medical waste disposal company without delivering the MED to the MED vendor for recycling. In this case, the company, etc. to whom the inspection institution has committed a disposal may register the disposal information relying upon the ID assigned to the MED. It is possible to inform medical institutions and independent users that MEDs, from which personal information of the independent users may be disclosed, have securely processed, for example, by uploading information of collected and disposed MEDs on a server on the network.

A description will now be given of embodiments according to the present invention.

#### FIRST EMBODIMENT

FIG. 1 is a view of a first embodiment according to the present invention showing one mode of share and utilization of an MED among plural users, which has been shipped by an MED vendor. FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a utilization mode of the MED in the first embodiment shown in FIG. 1. Here, a term "MED" generalizes such instruments as a DNA chip, Lab on a



Chip, a micro-array, and a micro-TAS, which are used for medical diagnoses.

A description will now be given of a first embodiment according to the present invention using flowcharts shown in FIGs. 1 and 2, and a system explanatory view in FIG. 6. A description will now be given of a system with reference to FIG. 6.

The MED vendor 11 that makes MEDs 10 serves to built a system and manage a server 12 as storage means in this system as well as having an MED information input unit, such as a personal computer ("PC") connected to the server 12.

The distributor 12 who sells the MEDs 10 may input information through the Internet via the server 12 and a LAN, and has an MED information input unit 16a, such as a PC.

A medical institution 13, such as a hospital, may input and output information through the Internet via the server 12 and a LAN, and includes an MED information input unit 13a and an MED information display 13b, such as a PC.

An inspection center 14 which inspects the MEDs 10 may input and output information through the Internet via the server 12 and a LAN, and includes an MED information input unit 14a and an MED information display 14b, such as a PC. In addition, the inspection

center 14 includes a MED result reader 14c and MED inspection unit 14d for inspecting the MEDs 10.

A patient or individual user 15 may input information through the Internet via the server 12 and the LAN, and possesses a medical inspection information display 15b, such as a PC.

A description will be given of a system flow.

The MED vendor 11 makes the MED 10 (step S201), and assigns an ID to the MED 10 (step S202). Here, a medical device, such as a DNA chip shown in FIG. 5, is made as the MED 10, and assigned a symbol that represents an ID as shown in FIG. 5A, or a barcode as shown in FIG. 5B.

The MED vendor 11 registers the ID assigned to the MED 10 in the server 12 (step S203) as well as its usage and usable term or lifetime unique to this MED (step S203). In the DNA chips, etc., actual usage for a patient changes according to novel developments, and a registration of the usage is extremely important information for future inspection purposes.

After this registration, the MED vendor 11 ships the MED 10 (step S204).

The distributor 16 that handles circulations and distributions of the MEDs 10 stores the MEDs 10 for sale. The MED vendor 11 may serve as the distributor 16. The distributor 16 registers information on a process of circulation, such as temperature control,

room temperature exposure time, and couriers and dates,  
with IDs as keys in the server 12 (step 205). The  
distributor 16 sells the MEDs 10 (step S206), and  
registers information of purchasers and sales dates  
5 with IDs as keys in the server 12.

The medical institution 13, such as a hospital and  
a clinic, uses purchased MEDs 10 (step S208), while  
using an ID as a key to view reference information  
necessary for the MED 10 as MED-related information  
10 which the MED vendor 11 has already registered, such as  
usage and expiration date of the MED 10 (step S209),  
thereby reducing misapplications with the utmost care.  
The medical institution 13 registers a use status and a  
user or patient name in the server (step S210), and  
15 informs the user or patient 15 of the ID of the MED 10  
(step S211).

The medical institution 13, etc. that has used the  
MED 10 disposes the MEDs 10 by itself, or delivers the  
MEDs 10 to an inspection center, such as a specialized  
20 evaluation institution that undertakes depository  
inspections of MEDs 10 (step S212). The inspection  
center or institution 14 that receives the delivery  
uses an ID as a key to register a delivery statue and  
condition, such as a shipping state, temperature  
25 control state, a time period and the number of days  
required, and a reception date in the server 12 (step  
S213).

The inspection center 14 inspects the MED 10 (step S214), and registers the inspection information in the server 12 (step S215A). The inspection center 14 disposes the useless MED 10 (step S216), and registers  
5 the disposal state, method, date and time, etc., in the server 12 (step S217).

Alternatively, the inspection center 14 delivers the MEDs 10 to the MED vendor 11 for recycling without disposal. The MED vendor 11 determines whether the MED  
10 10 is to be recycled, by taking into consideration its lifetime (such as the number of usable times, and the number of elapsed days from the manufacture date) of the MED 10, and management information (such as temperature control and delivery state) in a process of  
15 circulation at the medical institution and inspection center, etc. The record information was read out from the server 12 using an ID as a key. Of course, a new ID is assigned in recycling. However, a correlation with a prior ID is registered in the server 12 so that  
20 all the records after manufacture may be tracked in determining recycling again.

The medical institution 13 (such as a doctor) may use an ID as a key to view an inspection result of the MED 10 registered by the inspection center 14 (step  
25 S215B). The patient 15 is restricted to access the server 12 so that he may access the MED 10 that was used for his own examination and view its inspection

result. He cannot view information inappropriate to be informed to him, such as information other than his medical information, even if the MED 10 was used for his examination.

5       The above embodiment uses a system etc. that uses a network, e.g., LAN, using the Internet shown in FIG. 6 to enable the MED vendor 11, the distributor 16, the inspection center 14, etc. to write such information about the MEDs 10 as an ID, usage, lifetime,  
10   information on a process of circulation, and inspection information, down in the storage means in the server 2. Thereby, it uses an ID of the MED 10 as a key to remotely write particular additional information in the server 12 through input means provided in these MED  
15   vendor 11, distributor 16, inspection center 14, etc. via the network.

      In this way, a manufacturer of the MEDs and a plurality of users, such as a computer of the MED vendor 11, a computer of a doctor or medical  
20   institution 13 as a user, a computer of the individual 15, and a computer of the inspection center 14, register their statuses in the server 12 on the network, enabling a unitary management of all the information relating to the MED 10 using a chip ID. When the MED  
25   vendor 11 builds this system, it restricts accesses to viewable information based on a status of each client, checks any unfilled necessary information, and manages

stored or registered record information, such as a date and a writer.

This system enables an ID of one MED to be commonly used for a plurality of cites, and a plurality of users to use the ID as a key to register, view and  
5 utilize information of the MED 10. Thereby, the MED vender 11 may manage an expiration date and use status of each shipped MED 10, enlighten appropriate use, and recognize whether it is properly used. The distributor  
10 16 or a MED seller may readily recognize a shipping status from the MED vendor 11. Each user may recognize a status and content of the MED 10.

The contents registered by the inspection center 14 become viewable on the network. Thus, a user may  
15 easily obtain an inspection result without going to the medical institution directly or waiting for a notice to be sent by mail etc. The inspection center 14 may recognize how long and how the MED 10 has been used, a method of properly using the MED 10, and its expiration  
20 date, and this function provides a definite inspection. Each user may recognize that the MED that stores his personal information has been definitely processed through registrations of a collection and recycling by the MED vendor 11.

## 25 SECOND EMBODIMENT

FIG. 3 is a view of a second embodiment according to the present invention showing another mode of share

and utilization of a MED 20 among plural users, which has been shipped by a MED vendor 21. FIG. 4 is a flowchart of a utilization mode of the MED 20 in the second embodiment shown in FIG. 3. This embodiment may  
5 also use the same MED as that used for the first embodiment for the MED 20.

A description will now be given of a first embodiment according to the present invention using flowcharts shown in FIGs. 3 and 4, and a system  
10 explanatory view in FIG. 7. A description will be omitted for those elements which are the same as those in the first embodiment. A description will now be given of a system with reference to FIG. 7.

The MED vendor 21 that makes MEDs 20 serves to  
15 built a system and manage a server 22 as storage means in the system as well as having an MED information input unit, such as a PC connected to the server 22.

A distributor 22 who distributes to sell the MEDs 20 may input information through the Internet via the  
20 server 22 and a LAN, and has an MED information input unit 26a, such as a PC.

A medical institution 23, such as a hospital, may input and output information through the Internet via the server 22 and a LAN, and has an MED information  
25 input unit 23a and an MED information display 23b, such as a PC.

An inspection center 14 which inspect the MEDs 20 may input and output information through the Internet via the server 22 and a LAN, and has an MED information input unit 24a and an MED information display 24b, such as a PC. In addition, the inspection center 24 has a MED result reader 24c and MED inspection unit 24d for inspecting the MEDs 10.

The patient (or individual user) 25 is configured to input information through the Internet via the server 22 and the LAN, and has MED information input unit 25a and medical inspection information display 25b, such as a PC.

A description will be given of a system flow.

The MED vendor 21 makes the MED 20 (step S401), and assigns an ID to the MED 20 (step S202). The MED vendor 21 registers the ID assigned to the MED 20 in the server 22 (step S403) as well as usage and use term (or lifetime) unique to this MED 20 (step S403). After this registration, the MED vendor 21 ships the MED 20 (step S404).

The distributor 26 stores the shipped MEDs 20 for delivery. The MED vendor 21 may serve as the distributor 26. The distributor 26 registers information on a process of circulation, such as temperature control, room temperature exposure time, and shipping agents and dates, with IDs as keys in the server 22 (step 405). The distributor delivers the



MEDs 20 to the medical institution 23, such as a hospital and clinic (step S406).

The medical institution 13 as a purchaser, such as a hospital and a clinic, directly sells MEDs 20 (step S407), and registers information, such as a sales date, a purchaser (or a name of a patient), in the server 22 using an ID as a key (step S408). The patient (or individual user) 25 himself uses the MED 20 sold from the medical institution 23 as the above purchaser (step S409). Prior to the use, he retrieves usage and expiration date of the MED 20 using the ID as a key and views reference information for use with the MED 20 (step S410). The patient (or individual user) 25 uses the ID as a key to register a use status and date in the server (step S411), and informs the medical institution (or doctor of a hospital or clinic) 23 of the ID of the used MED 20 (step S412). A system that serves as a specific informing means registers the notification in the server 22 using the ID as a key in the server 22, and informs the medical institution 23 of the information.

The patient (or individual user) 25 delivers the MED 20 to the inspection center or institution 24 (step S413). The inspection center or institution 24 that receives the delivery uses an ID as a key to register a delivery statue and condition, such as a shipping state, temperature control state, and a time period and the

number of days required, in the server 12. The inspection center 24 inspects the MED 20 (step S415), and registers the inspection result in the server 22 (step S216A). The inspection center 24 disposes the  
5 useless MED 20 (step S417), and registers the disposal state, method, date and time, etc., in the server 22 (step S418).

Alternatively, the inspection center 24 delivers the MEDs 20 without disposal to the MED vendor 21 for  
10 recycling (step S418). The MED vendor 21 recycles the MED 20 by processing the MED 20 so as to enable it to be recycled, and registering in the server 22 whether individual information, such as patient's personal information (or genetic information), has been properly  
15 processed. The process relating to recycling is similar to the first embodiment.

The medical institution 23 (such as a doctor) may use an ID as a key to view the inspection result of the MED 20 registered by the inspection center 24 (step  
20 S416B). The patient 25 may also view the inspection result of the MED 20 registered by the inspection center 24 using the informed ID as a key (step S416C). The patient 25 may also confirm that the MED 20 has been properly processed.

25 The above embodiment uses a system etc. that uses a network, e.g., LAN, using the Internet shown in FIG. 7 to enable the MED vendor 21, the distributor 26, the

patient (or individual user) 25, etc. to write such information about the MEDs 20 as an ID, usage, lifetime, information on a process of circulation, and inspection information, down in the storage means in the server 22.

5     Thereby, it uses an ID of the MED 20 as a key to remotely write particular additional information in the server 22 through input means provided in these MED vendor 21, distributor 26, patient (or individual user) 25, etc. via the network.

10         In this way, the MED vendor 11, the distributor 26, the patient (or individual user) 25, and the inspection center 24 share information using an ID of the MED as a key which has been registered in the server 22 on the network. This system enables an ID of one MED to be  
15     commonly used for a plurality of cites, and a plurality of users to use the ID as a key to register, view and utilize information of the MED 20. Thereby, the MED vendor 21 may manage an expiration date and use status of each shipped MED 20, and the seller may readily  
20     recognize a shipping status from the MED vendor 21. Each patient (or individual user) 25 may recognize a status and content of the MED 20 to be used. The contents registered by the inspection center 24 become viewable on the network. Moreover, the patient (or  
25     individual user) 25 may share information with a doctor of the medical institution 23 for easy inspection.

Since the information is readily shared with the medical institution 23, a prompt care would be expected in abnormal time. The inspection center 24 may recognize how long and how the MED 20 has been used, and this function is useful for a careful inspection. Each patient (or individual user) may recognize that the MED that stores his personal information has been securely processed through registrations of a collection and recycling of the MED vendor 21.

10       As many apparently widely different embodiments of the present invention can be made without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the specific embodiments thereof except as defined in the

15   claims.